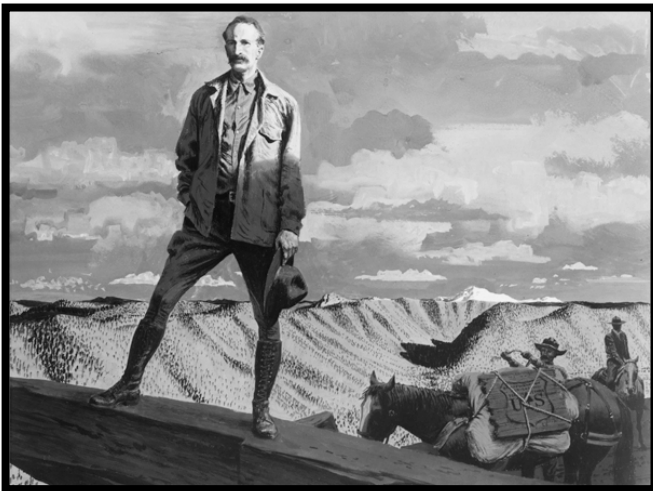**Gifford Pinchot**

Gifford Pinchot was born in 1865 and entered Yale University in 1885. His father asked a question "How would you like to be a forester?" When asked, not a single American had made forestry a profession. Pinchot stated, "I had no more conception of what it meant to be a forester than the man in the moon....But at least a forester worked in the woods and with the woods - and I loved the woods and everything about them....My Father's suggestion settled the question in favor of forestry."

Neither Yale nor any other university offered a degree or even a course in forestry, so Pinchot after graduation decided to study the subject in Nancy, France. After a year of school, he returned to the United States to prepare for his lifelong work and interest. He worked as a resident forester for Vanderbilt's Biltmore Forest Estate for three years. Several years later he became involved with the National Forest Commission created by the National Academy of Sciences. He and several other members traveled through the West during the summer of 1896 investigating forest areas for possible forest reserves. Two years later, he was named chief of the Division of Forestry. His friend Theodore Roosevelt was elevated into the Presidency by the assassination of President McKinley.

Gifford Pinchot is generally regarded as the "father" of American conservation because of his great and unrelenting concern for the protection of the American forests. He was the primary founder of the Society of American Foresters, which first met at his home in Washington in November 1900. He served as chief

with great distinction, motivating and providing leadership in the management of natural resources and protection of the national forests. He continued as forester until 1910, when he was fired by President Taft in a controversy over coal claims in Alaska.

To find out more about Gifford Pinchot (including text and photos provided here), visit the U.S. Forest Service History's website

https://foresthistory.org/research-explore/us-forest-service-history/people/chiefs/gifford-pinchot-1865-1946/